Keyword Generator

Use this worksheet to generate all the keywords you will need for conducting your literature review search.

Instructions

1. Start with 2–3 broad keywords related to your main topic or aim.

- Your research topic: _____
- Keyword 1: _____
- Keyword 2: _____
- Keyword 3: _____

2. For each broad keyword, brainstorm 3–5 more specific keywords. You can also draw a mindmap if this helps.

- Keyword 1: _____
    - Specific keywords: _____
    - Specific keywords: _____
    - Specific keywords: _____
- Keyword 2: _____
    - Specific keywords: _____
    - Specific keywords: _____
    - Specific keywords: _____
- Keyword 3: _____
    - Specific keywords: _____
    - Specific keywords: _____
    - Specific keywords: _____

3. Look at all the keywords. Which have synonyms that might have been used instead in the literature? Use a synonyms dictionary.

- Keyword: _____ → Synonym: _____
- Keyword: _____ → Synonym: _____
- Keyword: _____ → Synonym: _____

4. Give the main keywords to 2–3 colleagues and ask them what words they associate with them. Make sure that at least one of them does not work in your field.

- Colleague 1 keywords: _____
- Colleague 2 keywords: _____
- Colleague 3 keywords: _____

5. If you have different forms of the same word (e.g., child, children), replace them with truncation, i.e., child*. Do the same for words that researchers might have used in a different form, e.g., plural.

- Truncation keywords: _____

6. Go through the list of all the keywords. Eliminate those that are not relevant to the topic. You should have approximately 5–10.

- Keywords I will use: _____
- _____
- _____
- _____